

## How Joan Took the Country

By BELLE MANIATES

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When Joan Williams, who had taken first prize in the school of photography and her friend, Lucile King, stepped from the platform of the little station near the farm where they intended to spend the summer, they at first saw no one waiting for them.

Joan's quickly moving eyes covered the whole scene in appreciation. The colliding and jostling of incoming and outgoing passengers, the frantic haste of belated visitors contrasting with the exasperating leisure of the ticket agent, the jolting pace of the man behind the baggage truck, the rickety voiced driver of the bus, besieging passengers to ride to the Puffet House, the passive minded driver of the one slab by hack, formed a series of most realistic pictures which made Joan touch the button many times.

A peculiarly fashioned horse attached to a two seated democrat now drove up. Joan was somewhat in doubt first as to the genuineness of the animal, which seemed to her to have a homemade aspect. The driver was gazing into space, with no manifest interest in the arrival of the train.

Again she touched the button, while Lucile, who had spent the summers of two years in this vicinity, went quickly up to the newcomer.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Bates? This is my friend, Miss Williams."

The girl occupied the back seat of the vehicle. Mr. Bates uttered a mild "Good-ay" and the horse made a forward movement, tearing away in clumsy gallop across the long bridge, at the end of which he settled down into a nippy little gait.

"Old Hundred didn't omit his usual bridge sprint," observed Lucile.

"Old Hundred! He doesn't deserve such a cognomen," observed Joan.

"You will think so. He hasn't settled down into his smallest pace yet."

"Good-ay!" reiterated Mr. Bates, roused to effort by this insinuation and smartly slapping the reins across the steed's ample back.

"He doesn't 'good-ay' very fast," commented Joan.

"Do you earn your own living, too?" asked the old man, turning to her quickly.

"I hope so," she replied modestly. "I take pictures. I expect to take your whole country."

"I hope it brings you more than writing poetry," he said, with a glance at Lucile. "The *Hedgehog Gazette* only pays for it in subscriptions and trade."

Joan gave an ecstatic laugh.

"But Lucile writes for big magazines. She is paid by the word."

"You don't tell me! She must be awfully rich."

"But sometimes I sit for hours and can't think of a word," confessed Lucile.

"Words are plenty enough," he declared scornfully. "You can get them out of a dictionary."

"I never thought of that," she replied naively.

At nearly every farmhouse en route Mr. Bates "whooshed" to deliver packages. Now it was the farmer's wife who came out to the wagon and again it was a bashful boy or a giggling girl. In every instance Joan's camera was active.

The post commission was necessarily at home or in person. Mr. Bates stopped in front of a barn near the roadside and there deposited a suspicious looking package. Farther on they met a farmer who looked at them inquiringly.

"Put it in the barn, Fred," said Mr. Bates significantly.

"All right." Bestowing a knowing wink upon his purchasing agent, Fred hastened forward.

"How are the Locke girls?" asked Lucile. "And do you all help them as much as you did?"

Mr. Bates then related a pathetic story of the misfortunes of the Locke girls, who had lived together for seventy odd years in the little tumble-down house with its sparse garden patch. The mortgage had been foreclosed. Rox's sight had failed her, and she was unable to do the "picking" and "quilling" by which they had helped save out their living.

The poorhouse was looming up in their horoscope, though the neighbors were preparing to give a harvest ball and bestow the proceeds therefrom to the averted of this calamity. By the time this narrative was finished they had reached the farmhouse of the Bates household, and Mrs. Bates came out to greet the "city folks," who were shown to their "bedroom" of the sitting room.

"The live stock seem to be making a grand entrance," said Joan presently, parting the curtain. "Through the hole in the screen door some chickens are entering. On the stairs are a multitude of cats, and a stray sheep—I think it is a sheep—bleats on the back steps. Mrs. Bates is sending the dog for the cows. Will he bring them into the house?"

Her thought was still of a menagerie when she awoke the next morning, conscious of a slight motion of the house, accompanied by a most peculiar sound. She awoke Lucile, who sat up to listen.

"It's an earthquake!" asserted Joan. "Unless the house is portable, I should not be surprised if we were all en route to the barn to do the chores."

"Mrs. Bates!" cried Lucile. "What ails the house?"

Mrs. Bates answered the summons.

"The house isn't bowed up, you know, and the dogs go under it when they get out of their nests. They

scratch their backs on the floor, and it rocks the house a little, but it's safe."

"Lucile," said Joan, gravely when their hostess had returned to the kitchen precincts, "I had thought of naming this delightful place Noah's Ark, but now I think the Hogs' Back will be more appropriate."

At breakfast Mrs. Bates gave more particulars of the disasters that had attacked the Locke household and asked to enlist their help in the forthcoming ball. Joan appeared abstracted and offered no suggestions. Lucile proposed a fair in connection with the dance and began to paly her need in the fashioning of sofa pillows.

The next few days were devoted by Joan to long solitary rambles, in which she always carried her camera.

"I think I have took the whole country," she announced one day. "I am going to send the plates to the city for development, as I haven't the facilities here."

The day before that set for the fair and dance a huge express package was brought to Joan, but she refused to open the contents to any one.

On the momentous evening she went to the big barn where the dance was to be held an hour in advance of the time set. When the Bates household arrived they saw her seated demurely at a table surrounded by a group of eager, chattering folks. An artistically lettered sign read:

"Would you see yourself as others see you? Come and find yourself. If not here, faces made to order at future date."

Lucile and the Bates family hastened to the table, which was covered with photographs of all styles and sizes, snapshots of the country folks in and about Hedgehog caught in unpremeditated poses. Farmer Lane hooking up the team, Mrs. Lapp feeding chickens, Beesie Graves churning, Jed Stracken milking the little Blatchfords going blackberrying, Lane's Carlo bringing home the cows, etc. No one was overlooked.

Also there were pictures of home, barns, cattle, the church, the cemetery, schoolhouse, sawmill, and many old landmarks, all on sale, not to mention pictures of the Locke girls.

The news spread, and every newcomer hastened up to see if his likeness was there. Ardent swains secured pictures long denied them by coy damsels. At the close of the evening her hand bag was well filled with coin.

"This," she said, extending the money to Mrs. Bates, "is my contribution toward the Locke estate."

As she suspected, she was besieged for many days by people from miles around who heard they had been "takook." If by chance one had been overlooked, the omission was remedied.

"I think," remarked Joan meditatively as she looked a last farewell from the car window on her return to the city, "that the center and I are now on intimate terms, and with the sale of pictures and proceeds of the dance, not to mention contributions from the neighbors, I can see at least two years of prosperity for the Locke girls."

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Farming is virtually the only great series of occupations that is unorganized, unsyndicated, unmonopolized, uncontrolled, except as it is dominated by natural laws of commerce and the arbitrary limitations imposed by organization in other business. In a time of extreme organization and subordination of the individual the farmer still retains his traditional individualism and economic separateness. His entire scheme of life rests on intricate earning by means of his own efforts. The scheme in most other businesses is to make profits, and these profits are often nonintrinsic and fictitious, as, for example, in the habit of gambling in stocks, in which the speculator by mere shrewdness turns over his money to advantage, but earns nothing in the process, and contributes nothing to civilization in the effort. If the farmer steps outside his own realm he is met on one side by organized capital and on the other by organized labor. He is confronted by fixed earnings. What he himself secures is a remainder left at the end of a year's business.

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June 4, 1906.

ESTATE OF FRANCIS A. HARRISON, son, deceased.

Pursuant to the order of GEORGE E. RUSSELL, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned administrator of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to exhibit to the subscriber under oath or affirmation their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from prosecuting or recovering the same against the subscriber.

MARCUS S. CRANE.

June 4, 1906.

ESTATE OF ANNIE DOWD DE-

PENSE, deceased.

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EDWIN A. WHITE.

June 4, 1906.

ESTATE OF MARY E. DOWD DE-

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